What is claimed is:

1. A live attenuated PRRS virus comprising ORF 1a, 1b and 2 essentially as in ATCC VR-2332, wherein said virus is not ATCC VR-2495, and wherein at least one of the amino acids in position 321 to 341 encoded by ORF 1a is not identical to the amino acid(s) of ATCC VR 2332 at the corresponding position(s) and/or at least one of the amino acids in position 936 to 956 encoded by ORF 1b is not identical to the amino acid(s) of the strain VR 2332 at the corresponding position(s) and/or at least one of the amino acids in position 1 to 20 encoded by ORF 2 is not identical to the amino acid(s) of ATCC VR 2332 at the corresponding position(s), and wherein said live attenuated PRRS virus is less virulent than ATCC VR-2332.

2. The live attenuated PRRS virus according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the amino acids in position 321 to 341 encoded by ORF 1a is deleted and/or at least one of the amino acids in position 936 to 956 encoded by ORF 1b is deleted and/or at least one of the amino acids in position 1 to 20 encoded by ORF 2 is deleted.

3. The live attenuated PRRS virus according to claim 1, wherein the amino acid in position 331 encoded by ORF 1a and/or the amino acid in position 946 encoded by ORF 1b and/or the amino acid in position 10 encoded by ORF 2 is/are not identical to the amino acid(s) of ATCC VR-2332 at the corresponding position(s).

4. The live attenuated PRRS virus according to claim 2 wherein the amino acid in position 331 encoded by ORF 1a and/or the amino acid in position 946 encoded by ORF 1b and/or the amino acid in position 10 encoded by ORF 2 is/are deleted.

5. A nucleotide sequence coding for a virus according to any one of claims 1 to 4.

6. The nucleotide sequence according to claim 5, wherein the nucleotide sequence has been modified to encode a virulence marker and/or a serological marker.

7. The nucleotide sequence according to claim 6, wherein the nucleic acid encoding said marker is located within any of the open reading frames encoding structural viral proteins.

8. A method for the generation of an infectious live attenuated PRRS virus comprising producing a recombinant nucleic acid comprising at least one full-length DNA copy or in vitro-transcribed RNA copy or a derivative of either wherein said nucleotide sequence is a nucleotide sequence according to claim 5.

9. A method for the generation of an infectious live attenuated PRRS virus comprising producing a recombinant nucleic acid comprising at least one full-length DNA copy or in vitro-transcribed RNA copy or a derivative of either wherein said nucleotide sequence is a nucleotide sequence according to claim 6.

10. The method according to claim 8, comprising specifically mutating the nucleotide sequence corresponding to the nucleotide sequence encoding amino acid positions 321 to 341 of ORF 1a and/or the nucleotide sequence corresponding to the nucleotide sequence encoding amino acid positions 936 to 956 of ORF 1b and/or the nucleotide sequence corresponding to the nucleotide sequence encoding amino acid positions 1 to 20 of ORF 2 wherein at least one nucleotide at said positions is substituted or deleted.

11. The method according to claim 9, comprising specifically mutating the nucleotide sequence corresponding to the nucleotide sequence encoding amino acid positions 321 to 341 of ORF 1a and/or the nucleotide sequence corresponding to the nucleotide sequence encoding amino acid positions 936 to 956 of ORF 1b and/or the nucleotide sequence corresponding to the nucleotide sequence encoding amino acid positions 1 to 20 of ORF 2 wherein at least one nucleotide at said positions is substituted or deleted

12. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a PRRS virus according to any one of claims 1 to 4; and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

13. A method for the prophylaxis and treatment of PRRS infections comprising administering a PRRS virus according to any one of claims 1 to 4.